

SOUTH SUDAN EMERGENCY

7-12 March

UNHCR Operational Highlights

- South Sudanese asylum seekers continue to arrive in the Gambella Region mainly through Akobo Tergol and Pagak border entry points which remain open, providing asylum seekers unhindered access to Ethiopian territory. Over the week of 1-8 March 2014, 7,817 new arrivals were received at Pagak entry point alone. This leads to a total of 69,456 refugees who have entered the Gambella Region via Pagak and other entry points as well, including Akobo Tergol and Burbiey.
- UNHCR is interviewing the new arrivals, many of whom informed that they come from areas far from the border, including Malakal, the capital of Upper Nile State. Other refugees reported that they did not immediately come to Ethiopia but instead tried to find safe locations in South Sudan to stay, but that they were eventually compelled to flee across the border due to a lack of food and insecurity. Many reported travelling through Nasir and then entering Ethiopia in the Gambella Region. Many of those coming from Jonglei and Upper Nile States said that they were former refugees in Ethiopia and had repatriated to South Sudan.
- Registration activities are continuing in Pagak, Akobo Tergol as well as Leitchuor Camp. In Pagak, WFP undertook general food distribution as a measure to address the food situation of the refugees waiting to be relocated. Food distribution started on 10 March, with sugar, salt, oil and sorghum being distributed by ARRA with support from WFP. Jerrycans are also being provided by UNHCR and distributed by ARRA to assist with water collection.
- Relocation of new arrivals by IOM from Pagak and Akobo to Tierkidi and Leitchuor is ongoing. According to IOM, thus far in March 13,070 people have been relocated, comprising 2,298 individuals transferred by boat from Akobo to Leitchuor via Burbiey, 8,038 individuals transferred from Pagak to Leitchuor and 2,734 individuals transferred from Pagak to Tierkidi. UNHCR is exploring together with UNHAS the possibility of bringing in a helicopter to assist with movements to and from Akobo, which would carry passengers to accelerate relocation movements and to ensure life-saving assistance, including food. With a population of over 29,400 people, Leitchuor has already surpassed its planned capacity of 20,000 and UNHCR is discussing with ARRA and partners plans for an additional site considering the topography of Leitchuor and the increasing numbers of refugees.
- All 897 children identified as malnourished during the recent MUAC screening have now been relocated together with their families to either Tierkidi or Leitchuor camps, where they were immediately enrolled in treatment programmes and have access to other services and assistance provided in the camps. Nutritional screening is being undertaken as an ongoing activity by ACF and MSF-F. Surveillance amongst new arrivals has been stepped up and any children with severe acute malnutrition are immediately relocated to Tierkidi.

NUTRITION

- UNHCR worked together with ARRA, WFP, UNICEF, IOM, MSF-F and ACF to ensure that children identified as malnourished in the MUAC screening of 24-25 February are prioritised for relocation. As a result, all 897 children identified during the screening have now been relocated together with their families to either Tierkidi or Leitchuor camps, where they were immediately enrolled in treatment programmes and have access to other services and assistance provided in the camps. In addition, also in Tierkidi ACF is operating a nutritional treatment programme with a referral system to Itang Health Centre, 9 kilometres from Tierkidi, where GOAL is operating a nutritional stabilization centre.
- In the meantime, nutritional screening is ongoing in Pagak and any new cases identified are enrolled in the treatment programme that is being implemented by ACF, and prioritised for relocation by IOM. For such cases, relocation normally takes place within 48 hours after identification, after IOM completes its medical screening required for travel. ACF is implementing Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programmes in both Pagak and Tierkidi for all children under 5 years old and pregnant and lactating mothers, with support from UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and NRC.
- As there is a growing need to assess the nutritional status of refugees in Akobo, ACF is to start screening the refugees relocated from Akobo to Leitchuor and provide an analysis of the MUAC trends which will assist with further decision-making on interventions.

HEALTH

- The Gambella Regional Health Bureau with support from UNICEF is providing 24 hour health services in Pagak, while also implementing a mobile clinic in Tierkidi which will soon extend to a 24 hour service. MSF-France has also started mobile health services in both locations while also providing 24 hour services in Leitchuor and Akobo.
- The Gambella Regional Health Bureau is planning a region-wide measles mass vaccination campaign to begin on 14 March. No measles cases have been reported in Akobo. Timely vaccination coverage of new arrivals is ensured through the integration of vaccination teams in the registration teams as well as stationing vaccination teams at Leitchuor and Tierkidi to screen relocated refugees who may have missed out on the initial vaccination at the entry points.

WASH

- In Leitchuor, 210,000 litres of water are trucked on a daily basis, which is equivalent to 9.6 litres of water per person per day. DRC is doubling the number of taps in Leitchuor to reduce the ratio of people per tap from 477 to 250, as well as improving the tapstand platforms and communal latrine slabs. In Tierkidi, 60,000 litres of water are trucked each day, which corresponds to 20 litres of water per person per day. A 30,000 litres storage capacity has been installed together with 30 taps on 5 tap stands. In Pagak, a 10,000 litre bladder tank has been installed together with six taps in the EMWAT kit.
- Also in Leitchuor, UNICEF has completed the drilling of a second shallow borehole, while pump testing for the deep borehole also started by LWF. Motorisation of this deep borehole is also planned which will significantly reduce the trucking distance for water.

- In Leitchuor, Pagak and Tierkidi, additional community hygiene workers have been recruited and provided training (25, 4 and 6 individuals respectively). Also in Tierkidi, 50 latrine stances with plastic slabs are in use, and another 48 have been completed with eucalyptus slabs. Bathing shelters are also being constructed.
- In Leitchuor, a total of 248 communal latrine stances are completed; however, the ratio of people to latrine remains high at 85:1 due to the increase in population. NRC is now beginning the construction of family latrines for households that have moved into transitional shelters, with three design options to be trialled and refined.
- In Akobo, ZOA continues to operate the UNICEF-funded EMWAT kits, with plans to increase the number of water treatment cycles from two to three. Latrine construction is also ongoing in Akobo and a cleaning and sanitation campaign was recently implemented by hygiene promoters in Akobo with support from ZOA.
- In Pagak, drilling of two shallow boreholes has been completed with a third borehole under construction. Installation of a 5,000 litre tank at the wet-feeding point has also begun. DRC has intensified community mobilisation and sensitization campaigns aimed at encouraging the use of latrines.

Estimated immediate needs

UNHCR is revising its budgets for the new planning figures of 150,000 people. UNHCR is also coordinating together with its partners an inter-agency appeal for the emergency to be launched in early March 2014.

UNHCR is also continuing to coordinate a Task Force for partners present in Gambella on a fortnightly basis in Addis Ababa, and three times a week in Gambella in addition to the regular Inter-Agency Task Force meetings at Addis Ababa level.

Partners

Government	UN/IO	NGO			
ARRA	WFP	ERC	SCI	LWF	DRC
NRDEP	Unicef	NRC	ZOA	MSF/F	HelpAge
Regional Health Bureau	IOM	IRC	Goal	ACF	IMC
Regional Water Bureau	UNOPS				
	WHO				
	UNFPA				

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